

When the Capitol and member's offices were assaulted with anthrax, the Comptroller General and the GAO employees generously shared their office space with the members of the House of Representatives and their staffs. GAO employees made quite a sacrifice in doing so. Many were displaced from their own offices in order to provide the House of Representatives with workspace. Because of the selflessness of these employees, the House of Representatives was able to continue to do their work on behalf of the American people and help our nation fight against the evils of terrorism.

Today, I am pleased to join my colleagues in thanking the Comptroller General and the GAO for their assistance. They have been a great help during this very difficult time and their assistance will be remembered.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to express my strong support of this resolution.

Fortunately, it's not every day that the members of this House, and their staffs, must evacuate the House office buildings due to the presence of anthrax.

Let's hope it never happens again. Steps are certainly being taken to ensure it never happens again.

This House indeed owes a debt of gratitude to the General Accounting Office for making it possible for the people's House to continue its work during those two critical weeks.

The chairman's resolution eloquently expresses the sentiments that should be expressed, and I urge all members to support it.

As one whose office is in the Longworth Building, I spent considerable time working at the GAO. I found it to be a hospitable place, staffed by hospitable, dedicated Federal workers. I want to express my personal thanks to David Walker, the Comptroller General of the United States, for throwing open the doors of his agency to the House. I also want to thank Dick Brown, the GAO's comptroller and chief administrative officer, for spending many hours working to ensure the whole enterprise went smoothly, which it did. And I generally want to thank the dedicated employees of the General Accounting Office who were relocated, or otherwise inconvenienced, to accommodate me and my staff, and other Members and their staffs. Their sacrifice did not go unnoticed, or unappreciated.

Mr. Speaker, we should note that as hundreds of us descended upon the GAO headquarters, GAO's own important work continued, despite the disruption. This is a grand tribute to the professionalism of GAO employees.

The GAO's mission is to support the work of the Congress as our budgetary watchdog. The leadership and staff of the GAO can now say, with pride, that they have supported the work of the House directly as never before. This incident rightly belongs in the annals of congressional history. This resolution ensures it will be properly recorded.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting that the House express its gratitude to the GAO and its wonderful employees for allowing us to continue our operations during this time. I applaud the chairman for bringing this resolution to the floor. I urge an "aye" vote on the motion.

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H.Res. 294.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of House Resolution 294, the resolution just agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD ASSIST STATES TO MAINTAIN ADVANCEMENTS IN EDUCATION

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, due to the faltering economy, State education budgets are being squeezed all across the country. According to last week's report of the House and Senate committees which deal with education, this year States will cut \$11 billion in real education reductions. More cuts are likely, since State budgets are now showing a deficit of some \$25 billion, and this does not take into account the full impact of the September 11 attack.

Elementary and secondary education is one-third of the States' budget, so obviously they are going to have to be cut. But we ought to do all we can in the stimulus package to make sure that we support education.

Over the last couple of years, schools have started to make progress in closing the achievement gap between poor and minority children and majority children and suburban children. We have made efforts on education reform. Children are doing better on the State exams and on the national exams.

We ought to make sure that we do not lose this progress that we have made. We must understand that we cannot allow our children's education and the educational resources of this Nation to be set back because of the short-term recession.

The Federal Government ought to do all it can to help States out at this

time so we do not lose the advancements that have been made.

California faces a \$4.5 billion budget shortfall this year. California's revenues are projected to fall by 12% this year, the largest decline since World War II.

To balance the budget, Governor Gray Davis has been forced to propose \$843 million in education cuts, including after-school programs and initiatives to help low-performing schools.

The cuts are likely to be worse next year, when the state projects a \$12.4 billion shortfall.

According to Brett McFadden of the Association of California School Administrators, "It took years to recover from the budget deficits in the early '90s. If we have to go through that again, that is going to create lasting damage to the entire system." (San Francisco Chronicle, Nov. 15, 2001).

Yesterday's New York Times described the impact the cuts will have on Harvey Elementary School in Santa Ana.

After-school literacy classes for native-Spanish speakers has helped increase the proportion of fourth-graders reading above grade level from 7% to 25% in two years.

One teacher called the progress her students had made in just three months "remarkable."

But state and local budget cuts may force the program to replace certified teachers with college students, and cut the number of students served in half next year.

According to the schools' principal, "There was a window of opportunity here, and that is closing."

Congress is planning to spend tens or even hundreds of billions of dollars to respond to the economic recession and the effects of September 11.

Clearly, we must make sure that we provide adequate assistance to our public schools so that they may continue the advancements in quality that we expect them to make.

[From the Washington Post, Nov. 20, 2001]

SCHOOLS LACK FUNDS, STUDY WARNS

(By Michael A. Fletcher)

The slowing economy is preventing states from spending the money needed on education to keep pace with inflation and surging enrollments, and the federal government should do more to fill the funding gap, according to a report by congressional Democrats.

The report said that education spending in 47 states has fallen a combined \$10.5 billion behind what would be needed to keep pace with rising costs. Also, 11 states have cut a combined \$800 million from their budgets, in some cases eliminating remedial classes, after-school tutoring and summer school.

The budget problems are likely to multiply as states confront the economic problems they have suffered in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the report said. California alone is facing \$843 million in proposed education spending cuts to help balance a \$12 billion revenue shortfall over the next two years.

"The faltering economy is putting at risk the advancement that many states are making to improve the quality of their educational systems," said Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.), the ranking minority member of the House education committee.

The report was released by Miller and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), the key